THE DOCTRINE OF Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance CONSIDERED.

WITH

Some Observations on the Necessity and Advantages of the REVOLUTION in the Year 1688.

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Published on Occasion of
Lord *DUN*'s Friendly and Familiar ADVICES.

Hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi.
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THE

Doctrine of PASSIVE OBEDIENCE and NON-RESISTANCE CONSIDERED.

SINCE an author of ſuch eminence, as Lord *Dun*, in a late book, intituled, *Friendly and familiar advices, &c.* among the advices which he addreſſes to ſubjects, hath endeavoured to revive the exploded doctrine of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance; I have thought it proper to make a few remarks upon the principles contained in that part of his Lordſhip's book: as I cannot but think, that ſuch principles have a very unfavourable aſpect towards the conſtitution of the *Britiſh* government, and the ſettlement of the crown in the Proteſtant line of our antient princes.

Had an anonymous writer, or an author of an inferior rank or character, recommended principles of this nature, few perhaps would have taken much notice of them; fewer ſtill would have been in any danger of being miſled by them: but when they are to be found in a book, which is intended for general uſe, and in all probability will be much read; when they are mixed with many pious and uſeful advices, which will be much eſteemed; when they come

come from a venerable old man of very great experience and greatly diſtinguiſhed for piety; in particular, when ſuch principles are maintained by a learned gentleman, who has been ſo long one of the honourable judges, who, while a judge, ſupported his character with dignity, and has lately reſigned his office with honour: it becomes neceſſary to offer ſome animadverſions upon them, and enter a caveat againſt their dangerous influence.

Tho' I differ extremely from his Lordſhip in his principles concerning paſſive obedience, and cannot but think that they have been publiſhed very unſeaſonably; yet I would look upon it as highly indecent, and altogether unjuſtifiable, to give the leaſt degree of ill treatment to one of his Lordſhip's good character and real worth; or to make any unhandſome inſinuations to his diſadvantage. I will keep at the greateſt diſtance from every thing of this kind. I can very eaſily allow, not only the innocence, but the goodneſs of his intentions. I can likeways ſuppoſe, that his Lordſhip and ſeveral others, both in *Scotland* and *England*, who are capable of more refined diſtinctions and deeper politics than thoſe of the vulgar, may imagine that they can reconcile their principles of paſſive obedience to the ſettlement that was made at the revolution: yet, without doubt, ſuch principles, if generally embraced, muſt have a very dangerous effect on the great body of the peo-

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ple of this iſland, who are not capable of ſuch deep politics and refined diſtinctions.

For, as it will naturally occur to the bulk of mankind, that reſiſtance was made to the Sovereign within the memory of man, in the reign of the late King *James*; and that, afterwards, the ſucceſſion to the crown was ſettled in the Proteſtant-line of our antient princes, in excluſion of the whole Popiſh race; and that the preſent government is founded on this ſettlement: if the great body of the people of this iſland ſhall be perſuaded to believe, that reſiſtance to the King is unlawful on any pretence whatſoever, and that it is unjuſt to exclude his heirs from the ſucceſſion to the throne; it is natural for them to lament the reſiſtance that was made at the revolution; it is natural to believe, that the preſent government is unlawfully founded, and to reckon themſelves in no way obliged to defend it; nay, it muſt be natural for them to embrace the firſt opportunity of overturning it. Nor would an opportunity be long wanting for this purpoſe.

Lord *Dun*'s intentions may be extremely innocent: yet his principles muſt operate on the bulk of mankind according to their real nature; and, as their influence at preſent muſt be dangerous, it is neceſſary to point out their abſurdity, and ſhew, that they are intirely without foundation in equity or juſtice.

I need not enter into any long argument upon this head. The queſtion has been debated, on both

both ſides, by the moſt able and learned advocates; the debate ſeemed to have been concluded, and the affair ſettled long ago. The queſtion ſeemed to have been given up, even by the warmeſt Jacobites. His Lordſhip is the only man of rank, and of another character, who hath thought it proper to revive it; and his name is great: but his arguments will not be found to be equally formidable. In order to refute them, it will only be neceſſary to make the proper ſuppoſitions, and to put ſtrong caſes, that the world may ſee more diſtinctly, to what abſurdities ſuch principles muſt lead us. I propoſe to do this in a very few lines.

In illuſtrating this ſubject, there will be no neceſſity of any controverſy with the patrons of paſſive obedience, concerning ſubjection in general. Doubtleſs, it is both the duty and intereſt of ſubjects to ſubmit to thoſe who rule over them. Neither is there any neceſſity to conſider where the ſupreme power in any ſociety is, or ought to be lodged. His Lordſhip, indeed, if I underſtand him perfectly, is of opinion, that, in the *Britiſh* conſtitution, the ſupreme power is lodged in the Monarch; or, at leaſt, that abſolute ſubmiſſion is due to him: I have been taught, on the contrary, that, in this happy iſland, the legiſlative power, which is lodged in the King and the two houſes of parliament, is the ſupreme power. This was pleaded by the moſt zealous advocates for the doctrine of paſſive obedience, at the trial of

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Dr. *Sacheverel*, before the houſe of Lords, in the year 1710: but where-ever his Lordſhip places the ſupreme power in the *Britiſh* monarchy, or whatever power he aſſigns to the Monarch, as perhaps this is not abſolutely clear from his book; ſo, it is unneceſſary, in the preſent queſtion, to enter into any controverſy about it. It is acknowledged, that the caſe is the ſame, whether the ſupreme power is lodged in the hands of one or five hundred: in both theſe caſes, ſubjection in general is due to the ſupreme power, and in neither of them are ſubjects obliged to pay an abſolute ſubmiſſion. Nor is it neceſſary to conſider, how far active obedience ought to be given to the higher powers. His Lordſhip, indeed, has not taken notice of any limitations in this caſe. But, undoubtedly, one of ſuch ſincere piety will acknowledge, that we ought to obey God rather than man; and that we ought not to do any thing that is wicked or forbidden by the laws of God, tho' expreſly and peremptorily enjoyned by all the Sovereigns in the world.

The only queſtion, therefore, that remains, is concerning paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance; for which his Lordſhip contends ſo ſtrenuouſly, that he aſſerts it to be unlawful, inexpedient, and hurtful for ſubjects, to reſiſt their Sovereign in any caſe, or upon any pretence whatſoever. Let us examine in what manner he ſupports this favourite principle: and what his

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Lordſhip has laid together upon this ſubject, may be reduced under three heads.

I. That it is the intereſt of ſubjects, in all caſes, to ſubmit to their Sovereign; and that it cannot be their intereſt to reſiſt him in any caſe whatſoever.

II. That ſuch reſiſtance is utterly inconſiſtent with the ends and deſigns of all government.

III. That it is repugnant and contradictory to the light of nature and reaſon, to the authority of ſacred ſcripture, and to the doctrine and practice of the primitive chriſtians. If his Lordſhip can prove theſe three propoſitions, he muſt undoubtedly prevail; but it will be altogether impoſſible to do it.

As to the firſt of them. How can it be maintained, that it cannot be the intereſt of ſubjects to reſiſt their Sovereign in any caſe whatſoever? If this be underſtood in the higheſt ſenſe, as his Lordſhip's ſtrong and univerſal terms ſeem to inſinuate, that, in no caſe whatſoever, that can poſſibly be conceived, reſiſtance can be expedient or profitable; a greater abſurdity can ſcarce be maintained: ſince the patrons of reſiſtance may put the caſe of total and immediate ruin, and ſuppoſe that a Sovereign of ten millions of people may ordain nine millions of them to be immediately put to death. Such a caſe, nay a more dreadful one, may certainly be put; and he muſt be a bold man who will aſſert, that it is the intereſt of the ſubjects of that nation tamely to ſubmit to ſuch a cruel order.

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But tho' it be underſtood in a reſtricted ſenſe, and nothing more is meant, but that whatever dreadful caſes may be ſuppoſed, in which reſiſtance may be expedient or neceſſary; yet no ſuch caſes ever happened, nor can poſſibly happen, in the courſe of human affairs; and that it is much better for ſubjects to take their chance of the worſt, and patiently to ſubmit to the moſt dreadful tyranny that can poſſibly happen, than to make any attempt to throw it off, by reſiſting their Sovereign: the doctrine, even in this limited ſenſe, is fraught with abſurdities.

For the happineſs of nations is of too great importance to be riſqued on ſuch an uncertainty. Who can tell what may happen, and what cannot happen, in the world? Tho' ſuch intolerable oppreſſion had never happened hitherto, (which is far from being the caſe), who can affirm, that it will never happen hereafter? who knows how far ſome Sovereigns may be diſpoſed to go in abuſing their ſubjects, eſpecially if they are aſſured before hand, that they ſhall never be reſiſted? It is wiſer, therefore, to leave mankind to judge what is beſt, according to the circumſtances that ſhall actually happen. Methinks, it is cruel and abſurd to bind them down, in all events, to ſubmit tamely to whatever may happen, how deſtructive ſoever.

His Lordſhip, indeed, would perſuade us, that " it is not to be imagined that any Monarch " will be ſo egregiouſly wicked, as merely to

" delight and take pleaſure in the miſeries and " ruin of his people, when, in conſequence, it " muſt bring the ſame ruin upon himſelf": or that " he will obſtinately ſhut his ears to the " repeated complaints of his people, when " there is cauſe and occaſion for them". Was there ever any ſuppoſition more precarious? Is not this a very fine tale for oppreſſed ſubjects? " Do not reſiſt your moſt gracious So- " vereign by any means. If you find yourſelves " oppreſſed, you may ſupplicate indeed, provi- " ded you do it in a very humble and dutiful " manner. If your own dutiful addreſſes ſhall " not prevail with him, to deſiſt from his wick- " ed and perverſe adminiſtration, you may em- " ploy others, particularly his great council or " his miniſtry, to petition in your behalf, in " the ſame humble and dutiful manner; but " you muſt not do more. Neither you nor " his great council have any right to reſiſt him " by force. And why would you think of ſuch " a diſagreeable meaſure? You may ſafely com- " mit yourſelves to his wiſdom and mercy; he " will certainly be too wiſe or too good to re- " fuſe to redreſs your grievances; or, if he " ſhould, it is a juſt trial or puniſhment for your " ſins, ſent by Almighty God, and it ought to " be borne with patience and reſignation". If his Lordſhip was not a man whom all the world knew to be much in earneſt in this book, ſuch an advice would appear ſomewhat jocular, when there have been ſo many tyrants who have re-

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fuſed to hearken to any addreſſes of this nature, nay, have found petitioning to be treaſon; and it is even more unwarrantable and enthuſiaſtical to interpret the tyranny of princes as a judgment of God, for which we muſt ſeek no other remedy than prayers and patience, than it would be to commit ſuch a fooliſh miſtake in the caſe of many other calamities or diſeaſes. Strange! that it cannot be imagined, that there ſhould be very great weakneſs or wickedneſs among mankind. How many, both ſubjects and Sovereigns, are blind to their own intereſts? How many are fooliſh, wicked, and miſchievous? But tho' the intereſt of the prince was intirely out of the queſtion, may not the intereſt of his flatterers and favourites lie that way? And what will not weak and wicked Princes often do to ſupport ſuch flatterers and favourites? In ſhort, all arguments drawn from ſuch topics contradict experience. Nay, his Lordſhip himſelf hath acknowledged, that "it may be the "mifortune of a people to be under a Sovereign "who takes delight in tyranny and oppreſſion; "and that it is certain that there have been mon-"ſters who have governed by no other rule than "their own corrupted will and perverſe pleaſure." What title therefore have the patrons of paſſive obedience to affirm ſo poſitively, that reſiſtance muſt always be more dangerous and hurtful than the moſt grievous tyranny? The contrary is certainly the truth: and, inſtances can be given, where ſubjects have actually reſiſted their

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Sovereign; where they have ſucceeded glorioufly, have rendered themſelves much more happy, and ſet their affairs on a much better footing. Of this an illuſtrious example ſhall be given in the courſe of the argument.

It will not indeed be denied, that, reſiſting a Sovereign, is attended with many inconveniences. His Lordſhip enumerates a great many, by which he would frighten ſubjects from reſiſtance. He ſets before them the dangers ariſing from unhinging antient ſettlements and cuſtoms; from diſputes about the ſucceſſion to the crown; from the continuance of theſe diſputes as long as any of the contending parties are exiſting; from inſurrections and rebellions againſt the new government in favour of the dethroned Sovereign or his race; from the maladminiſtration and greater tyranny of new Governours: from all which, it muſt be confeſſed, it evidently follows, that, none ought to reſiſt the government under which they live for ſlight cauſes or ſmall grievances, nor indeed for any thing but enormous tyranny, and ſuch intolerable oppreſſion, as may be ſaid to be fundamental, and to ſtrike at the root of the conſtitution. It is alſo true, that, tho' reſiſtance may be neceſſary, it may fail of ſucceſs; and therefore ought never to be attempted but in extraordinary caſes, and muſt be conducted with great wiſdom and bravery. This is all that can follow from the danger of reſiſtance; but, it is by no means a juſt concluſion, that, it can never

never be advantageous in any caſe whatſoever.

Reflecting on the dangers to which the beſt patriots are expoſed, in attempting to caſt off even the moſt grievous tyranny, it is natural to lament the hard condition of mankind: it needs not indeed be wondered at, that the vicious and abandoned, that the flatterers of tyrants, or ſuch as hope to find their advantage in the tyranny, ſhould zealouſly promote the doctrine of non-reſiſtance. But, is it not extremely unfortunate, that ſuch a doctrine ſhould be ſo warmly propagated by ſuch good men as his Lordſhip, from a deſire of the peace and welfare of nations, and from an exceſſive fear of the dangers of reſiſtance, when theſe very dangers do chiefly ariſe from ſuch anxious endeavours? Did not tyrants receive ſuch ill-judged and prepoſterous aſſiſtance from well-meaning men, how eaſy would it be, to give a timely and effectual check to all the wilful and wicked ſupporters and abettors of tyranny?

But how ſhall this dangerous and important deſign, of reſcuing a nation from the power of a tyrant, be projected and carried on? Can preciſe rules be laid down, when ſubjects ſhould reſiſt their Sovereign, and when they ſhould ſubmit patiently to mal-adminiſtration? To what man (or body of men) is the determination of ſuch an intereſting queſtion intruſted? Muſt not the peace of mankind be extremely precarious, if every man may raiſe a rebellion, whenever

ever he imagines that the ſtate is oppreſſed? How many, and how dangerous, will be the miſtakes committed in ſuch caſes? In fine, may it not be aſked, who have a juſt title, or can be ſuppoſed to be ſufficiently qualified and inſtructed, to conduct a matter of ſuch importance? Theſe, and twenty other queſtions of the like ſeeming importance, but trifling in reality, may be aſked, on purpoſe to perplex a clear caſe. But the anſwer is very eaſy. At ſometimes, oppreſſion is ſo groſs and avowed, that, a whole nation, or the far greateſt part of it, will be at no loſs to diſcern it: nay his Lordſhip ſeems to acknowledge this, when he confeſſes, that there have been monſtruous tyrants, and directs what is to be done in ſuch caſes. But, tho' ſubjects may fall into miſtakes, not only in this, but in many other caſes, in which, notwithſtanding the poſſibility of miſtaking, they muſt be left to their own judgment; tho', in conſequence of a miſtake in this matter, they may reſiſt when it is inexpedient; or tho' they may be wanting in prudence and courage to conduct their attempts happily; to prevent ſuch miſtakes, we muſt not take away all liberty of judging for themſelves, and bind them down in this particular caſe, to ſubmit to the moſt grievous oppreſſion. And, tho' preciſe and invariable rules cannot be laid down, for conducting ſuch affairs, which, of neceſſity, muſt be left to the wiſdom of patriots, and circumſtances of times; yet, notwithſtanding ſuch

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real or imagined difficulties, the defence of injured nations has already been, and may hereafter be attempted with bravery, prudence and ſucceſs. As the braveſt defenders of juſtice and liberty, muſt ever be odious to tyrants, and chiefly expoſed to their malice and power; it is better for them to venture upon the greateſt dangers, in defence of their country, than tamely to ſubmit to their inveterate enemies, when their country is oppreſſed; and, as far as the public intereſt is concerned, the controverſy comes to this ſhort iſſue, Whether it is not expedient for a nation to attempt to ſave themſelves from immediate deſtruction, with a chance, at leaſt, of preſerving the ſtate? Or if it is better to ſubmit to a certain deſtruction at preſent, from fear of uncertain dangers hereafter?

Neither ought the generous defenders of the rights of mankind, to be moved by any reproaches thrown upon them by ſycophants and paraſites, as if they preached up ſedition, and taught mankind to rebel: the guilt lies on the other ſide; and the patrons of paſſive obedience act the bad part in flattering tyrants, and, ſtirring them up to a miſchievous madneſs, by extravagant repreſentations of their irreſiſtible authority. Here lies the greateſt danger: for, tho' little mobbs and inſurrections, that are hurtful, may frequently happen, which the patrons of reſiſtance do not defend; it is evidently a matter of great difficulty to excite

a rebellion which will be of importance, or to engage any great party of ſubjects in a plot againſt the worſt of governments. What is chiefly to be apprehended, is not that mankind will wickedly riſe up againſt juſt Princes; but that, in caſes of enormous oppreſſion, no party ſhall be found of ſufficient ſtrength, bravery and wiſdom, to ſtem the tide of tyranny, and aſſert the cauſe of liberty and juſtice.

Hitherto, of the expediency or inexpediency of reſiſtance; and upon this the whole debate muſt turn at laſt, as far as natural reaſon and experience can judge of the matter: for, if it be an advantage for ſubjects to reſiſt their Sovereigns when they are intolerably oppreſſed, ſuch reſiſtance cannot be utterly inconſiſtent with the ends and deſigns of all government, as his Lordſhip aſſerts. The end and deſign of government is not the grandeur and advantage of any one man or family, but the general ſafety and common good of mankind: it cannot therefore be contrary to the end of government, that the governed ſhould reſiſt them who govern, when it is neceſſary for the general ſafety.

The nature of government does not require, as his Lordſhip maintains, an abſolute and uncontrollable power in the Sovereign. Government, may not only ſubſiſt, but be happily conducted, it may ſupport its authority, and preſerve peace, tho' it be underſtood, that there are certain caſes, in which the ſubjects neither

neither will nor are obliged to ſubmit: an uncontroulable power is by no means neceſſary in ſociety, and not only a good and wiſe government, but frequently a very bad, nay, a very fooliſh one, will be able to ſupport its authority.

His Lordſhip's ſimilitude, taken from paternal authority, evidently makes againſt him; for the power of parents is by no means uncontroulable; and many caſes of wicked or furious parents may be ſuppoſed, when the children have a good title in law and juſtice, forcibly to reſtrain them from violence; neither is this underſtood to undermine the juſt reverence and ſubjection which is due to parents.

The only remaining authority his Lordſhip can have recourſe to, in ſupport of his paſſive principles, is that of ſacred ſcripture; a ſufficient authority to be ſure, if it is on this ſide of the queſtion: but this will not be found to be the caſe.

It is true, ſacred ſcripture enjoins obedience and ſubmiſſion to magiſtrates, in a poſitive and expreſs manner; but, in many caſes, not only in holy writ, but in all books whatſoever, tho' commands are given in unlimited and univerſal terms, they muſt be underſtood to admit exceptions in ſome particular caſes; nor does this render the ſenſe uncertain, but the limited ſenſe in which they ought to be underſtood, appears from the analogy and ſpirit of the whole book, and from a compariſon of

different paſſages with one another. Therefore a precept, delivered in univerſal terms, without any particular exception, muſt not always be concluded to admit none. Thus the general expreſſions of ſacred ſcripture, " Children o- " bey your parents in all things. Servants o- " bey in all things your maſters according to " the fleſh," and other expreſſions of this ſort, muſt certainly be reſtricted; and, tho' no exceptions are taken notice of, they muſt be underſtood. His Lordſhip indeed hath obſerved that, " there does not appear to be any war- " rant or authority from divine oracles for the " doctrine of reſiſtance." If in this he means no more, but that no exception from the general rule of ſubjection is expreſſed, this makes nothing againſt what has been obſerved concerning the extent of general rules; but, if in this his Lordſhip demands, that all ſuch exceptions muſt be particularly enumerated, this is unreaſonable, and differs very little from the enthuſiaſtical demand of a preciſe text of ſcripture for authoriſing every action, and all the circumſtances of actions in life: no ſuch preciſe texts are neceſſary; it is ſufficient, and indeed it is all that can be expected in many caſes, that a practice ſhould be agreeable to the general rules, or ſpirit of ſacred ſcripture: and this is true of ſelf-defence, whether our lives and fortunes are unjuſtly attacked by private perſons, or our country is intolerably oppreſſed by a Sovereign who is bound

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to defend it. I am always ſorry to find abſurd doctrines attributed to holy writ, or the chriſtian ſpirit repreſented as ſilly and puſillanimous; this can never do any ſervice to ſacred ſcripture. With ſome reſtrictions, it will indeed be allowed, as his Lordſhip very juſtly obſerves, that "the characteriſtick of a true "goſpel ſpirit and chriſtian temper, is to ſuffer "injuries and wrongs, whether from our e-"quals, ſuperiors or inferiors." But the true goſpel ſpirit does not require ſuch a tameneſs or meanneſs of ſoul, or ſuch an imprudence of conduct as will not reſiſt injurious attacks in any caſe whatſoever; this ſort of humility is not chriſtian: chriſtian humility is perfectly conſiſtent with bravery and magnanimity, in defending our country againſt intolerable oppreſſion: and tho' unfortunately we ſhould miſcarry in ſuch a juſt defence, or after having ſucceeded, ſhould meet with various calamities in the courſe of providence; nay, tho' troubles and inconveniencies ſhould ariſe in ſucceeding times from the reſiſtance we have made to a Sovereign; this is far from being "a clear evidence (as his Lordſhip would inſi-"nuate), that God Almighty, in the conduct "of his providence, declares himſelf an enemy "to the practice of reſiſtance." We muſt not always read the ſin of rebellion in ſuch judgments, nor is this a loud call, in the courſe of providence, to return to our allegiance and ſubjection to the Sovereign, or to the lineal heir

heir of that Sovereign whom we have reſiſted: we ought not to interpret the courſe of providence in ſuch an erroneous and enthuſiaſtical manner. God knows that a nation may be guilty of abundance of other ſins to merit puniſhments, tho' they have been entirely innocent in the reſiſtance they had made in the caſe of oppreſſion.

As to the doctrine and practice of the primitive Chriſtians, to which his Lordſhip likeways has recourſe; it would be too tedious to enter upon a minute diſcuſſion of ſuch an intricate ſubject; it would be difficult, or rather impoſſible, preciſely to determine the opinions which many of the primitive Chriſtians entertained on this head: nor is it in any reſpect neceſſary; there is an eaſier way to anſwer all arguments, and ſolve all objections, from this quarter: for whatever reverence or regard we have, or ought to have, for the primitive Chriſtians, yet as corruptions crept in among them very early, as the very beſt of them, after the death of the apoſtles, were but fallible men, as ſeveral even of the fathers do not appear to have been exact reaſoners, or of the moſt accurate judgment, but were ſome times miſtaken both in facts and opinions; tho' we could have their deciſion upon this doctrine of reſiſtance, we are by no means obliged to ſtand to it, in oppoſition to reaſon and common ſenſe, and the cleareſt notions we can form of the nature of ſociety.

From

From the preceeding arguments it muſt evidently follow, that no King, nor any family whatſoever, has ſuch a plenary title to the ſubmiſſion of any nation, that the ſubjects may not defend themſelves againſt grievous oppreſſion, and uſe all proper means for their future ſecurity: neither can it be underſtood to have been the meaning of any antient law or compact concerning government, that the people ſhould never reſiſt the King or his heirs, in an uninterrupted ſucceſſion, tho' they ſhould prove a race of monſters and tyrants: ſuch a high degree of ſubmiſſion is ſo far from being neceſſary for the good of mankind, which was the original end of government, that on the contrary, it is abſolutely deſtructive of public ſafety, and can never be ſuppoſed to have been the intention of any people in entering into ſociety, at any time or in any place: but if any people were ever ſo mad, they could never, by any act or reſolution of theirs, bind down their poſterity to ſuch a fatal ſubmiſſion. As a conſequence of all which, ſubmiſſion to Kings and their heirs, and all the laws concerning ſucceſſion, muſt ever be ſubjected to the general good and exigencies of ſociety.

So far I have reaſoned in general, and conſidered the nature of government abſtractly, as his Lordſhip has done in his book. But, as ſuch arguments as are made uſe of, in the "Friendly "and familiar advices," notwithſtanding the good intentions of the author, may be applied

plied to that revolution in the government of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, which happened in the year 1688: I will make a few remarks upon this great event; and ſhew, that the reſiſtance that was made to the late King *James*, on that memorable occaſion, was not only lawful and juſt, but laudable in the higheſt degree; that, inſtead of being a ſource of miſery to *Britain*, it has been a fertile ſource of happineſs and ſecurity; and that the revolution and ſettlement of the government that was made at that time, was one of the beſt conducted enterprizes, one of the moſt important events, one of the moſt beneficent tranſactions, and, finally, one of the moſt ſolemn, deliberate, and prudent ſettlements of government, that perhaps ever happened in the world.

On ſuch an occaſion, let us not inſult the aſhes of the dead, nor trample upon the majeſty of Kings, let us not aggravate the errors of Princes beyond meaſure. Brave antagoniſts will contend fairly, and the moſt able defenders of religion and juſtice will abhor cruelty and brutal inſolence;

Odi malignum vulgus et arceo:

yet, thro' too much politeneſs, they ought not to betray ſo good a cauſe, nor decline doing juſtice to thoſe noble patriots, who ſo wiſely projected, conducted ſo prudently, and ſo ſucceſsfully accompliſhed, the glorious revolution: eſpecially they ought not to be ungrateful to the memory

memory of that great Prince, who was at the head of that magnanimous deſign; brave *William* of *Naſſau*.

On this occaſion, an infatuated King, ſolely under the direction of Popiſh prieſts and Popiſh councils, and, inflamed with an extravagant deſire of abſolute power, diſcovered a fixed deſign of overturning the legal eſtabliſhment of our religion, and altering the conſtitution of our monarchy. I would wiſh to throw a veil over the miſcarriages of this miſguided Prince, if it were poſſible to do it without injuſtice to the revolution; but, while there are any who caſt odious colours on the conduct of the nation, at that time, the people of *Great Britain*, muſt not be ſuffered to forget the diſtreſſes of their fathers during the reign of the late King *James* *.

For ſome months, in the beginning of his reign, all things went on ſmoothly, and the jealouſies that had formerly been entertained concerning him, ſeemed to be at an end. But, no ſooner had he defeated the rebellion raiſed by the Duke of *Monmouth*, than he gave new grounds of fear; for, in his ſpeech to the next ſeſſion of parliament, he acquainted the Lords and Commons, that, "there were ſome officers "in the army not qualified for their employ-"ments, according to the late teſts; and that, "to deal plainly, he would neither expoſe "them

* The following collection of facts is taken wholly from *Rapin*, who is one of the moſt impartial of our Hiſtorians.

" them to diſgrace, nor himſelf to the want of " them." This clear intimation of the King's intentions, raiſed many alarms; and the houſe of Commons, tho' greatly devoted to his intereſt, could not eaſily bear ſuch an open declaration of his deſign to diſpenſe with the law. But the King, inſtead of profiting by the ſenſe which they diſcovered of this procedure, continued to give freſh cauſes of diſcontent, and new proofs of his deſign to overturn the Proteſtant religion, and render his power abſolute: for, without any regard to legal incapacities, he brought Papiſts into all ſorts of offices, calling Papiſts to be ſerjeants at law, appointing Popiſh Privy counſellors, Popiſh Lord Lieutenants of counties, Popiſh officers in the army, and Popiſh judges; Proteſtants were every where diſplaced, and ſuch a great number of Papiſts were put into their room, that the whole power of the government was either in the hands of Papiſts or ſuch Proteſtants as were thought fit tools for executing the King's meaſures.

The King had eſpecially two great deſigns in view: one to have the diſpenſing power declared to be legal by the judges; the other to procure ſuch a parliament as would ratify it, and repeal the laws which diſqualified Papiſts from bearing offices in the government. In the firſt of theſe deſigns he ſucceeded, and, by cloſeting judges, diſplacing ſuch as were refractory, and placing others in their room, he made ſuch a nomination at length, that all of them, except

cept one, gave their opinion for the diſpenſing power. But, notwithſtanding his ſecret and open influence, and all his endeavours to accompliſh his ſecond deſign; by cloſeting members of parliament, by promiſes and menaces, by iſſuing *Quo warranto*'s againſt corporations, and all other methods which ſubtilty could deviſe; he could never procure ſuch a parliament as he wanted.

To ſupply this defect, and, in the mean time, to carry on his ſchemes more ſpeedily, he publiſhed ſeveral proclamations for liberty of conſcience, founded on his diſpenſing power. He began with *Scotland*, and, in his proclamation for that kingdom, expreſly declares, that, "he had thought fit, by his ſovereign autho-"rity, prerogative royal and abſolute power, "which all his ſubjects were to obey without "reſerve, to give and grant his Royal tolerati-"on, &c." Then, calling the laws which had formerly been made againſt Papiſts ſevere and cruel, he adds, that, "with the conſent of his "Privy-council, by his ſovereign authority, "prerogative royal, and abſolute power, he had "thought fit to ſuſpend, ſtop and diſable, all "laws or acts of parliament, made or executed "againſt any of his Roman-Catholic ſubjects, "in any time paſt, to all intents and purpoſes, "making void all prohibitions therein mention-"ed, pains or penalties therein ordained to be "inflicted, ſo that they ſhall, in all things, be "as free in all reſpects, as any of his Proteſt-

" ant ſubjects whatſoever, not only to exerciſe " their religion, but to enjoy all offices, bene- " fices and others, which he ſhall think fit to " beſtow upon them in all time coming."

He likeways publiſhed two proclamations for *England*, ſoſter indeed, yet much of the ſame complexion: thus he attacked the reformation by one bold ſtroke, and diſpenſed with all the laws which had been framed to ſupport it.

During this reign, the Clergy of the church of *England*, to their immortal honour, acted a very noble part, and made a bold ſtand againſt arbitrary meaſures. This being very diſagreeable to the court, it was thought neceſſary to fall on proper methods of terrifying them, and making them comply more eaſily with the deſigns that were in view. With this intention, the King erected a court of eccleſiaſtical commiſſioners, among whom there were ſome Papiſts, " with power to exerciſe and execute all " manner of juriſdictions and pre-eminences " concerning any ſpiritual or eccleſiaſtical juriſ- " dictions; to viſit, reform, redreſs and amend, " all abuſes, offences, contempts and enormi- " ties whatſoever, which, by the ſpiritual or ec- " cleſiaſtical laws of the Realm, might be law- " fully corrected; to ſearch for and call before " them all eccleſiaſtical perſons of what degree " or dignity ſoever, and to puniſh the offenders; " to ſend for all ſtatutes, rules, letters-patent of " univerſities, colleges, grammar-ſchools, and " all other eccleſiaſtical corporations; and the " ſaid

" ſaid ſtatutes to correct, amend, and alter, as " they ſaw convenient." By this commiſſion, the King ſubjected the whole body of the Proteſtant Clergy to Popiſh judges, in matters of doctrine and diſcipline.

In conſequence of ſuch violent meaſures, the Papiſts, with the King's permiſſion, ſet up, every where in the kingdom, the free and open exerciſe of their religion. The Jeſuites erected colleges and ſeminaries in all the conſiderable towns; four Popiſh Biſhops were publickly conſecrated in the King's chapel, and ſent down to exerciſe their functions, in their reſpective dioceſſes, under the title of *Vicars apoſtolical*; monks appeared in the habits of their order at *Whitehall*, and St. *James*'s; and ſcrupled not to tell the Proteſtants, that they hoped, in a little time, to walk in proceſſion thro' *Cheapſide*; a great number of prieſts and monks were ſent from foreign parts; all affairs of the King's council were managed by Papiſts, or ſuch as were under their influence; and, at laſt, the only way to preferment was by being a Papiſt or a promoter of popery.

At the ſame time that the Popiſh Clergy were ſo much encouraged, and let looſe upon the people; the King ſent a circular letter to the Biſhops, with an order, prohibiting all the inferior Clergy from preaching on controverted points of divinity: and Dr. *Sharp* having, in one of his ſermons, vindicated the church of *England*, in oppoſition to the errors of popery, the

the King ſent an order to the Biſhop of *London* to ſuſpend him; which the Biſhop refuſing to obey for the moſt ſolid reaſons, he was cited before the eccleſiaſtical commiſſioners to anſwer for this contempt; and, notwithſtanding the moſt reſpectful behaviour, both he and Dr. *Sharp* were ſuſpended. What conduct can be ſuppoſed more extravagant? And what ſafety could at laſt have been expected for any man, unleſs he reſolved to comply with every demand whatſoever?

This miſguided Prince gave inconteſtable proofs how far he intended to go at length. He ſent the Earl of *Caſtlemain* in embaſſy to the Pope, to reconcile his three kingdoms of *England*, *Scotland* and *Ireland*, to the holy See; a plain and certain document that he reſolved to keep no meaſures with his Proteſtant ſubjects. He likewiſe ſent an order to the univerſity of *Cambridge*, to admit a benedictine monk to be a Maſter of arts, without adminiſtrating any oath whatſoever, notwithſtanding any ſtatute or law to the contrary: which order not being obeyed, as it was contrary to their ſtatutes; he ſent a ſecond order, commanding them to do it at their peril: but, the univerſity refuſing a ſecond time, the Vice Chancelor and the congregation were cited before the eccleſiaſtical Commiſſioners, and the Vice Chancelor was deprived of his office. The univerſity of *Oxford* was treated yet more roughly, and ſeveral Papiſts were thruſt into it, contrary

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to law. The King permitted a Nuncio from the Pope, to make a ſolemn entry, and to be admitted to an audience in form; nay he removed the Duke of *Somerſet* from his offices, of Gentleman of the Bed-chamber and Collonel of dragoons, becauſe, from a regard to the law, he refuſed to attend the Nuncio to his audience.

To conclude, this unhappy Prince having publiſhed a ſecond declaration for liberty of conſcience, contrary to law; and having ordained the Biſhops to diſtribute it through their dioceſſes, that it might be read by the Clergy in their churches; the Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, with ſix other Biſhops, having, by a humble petition, laid before him the reaſons why they could not obey his order, they were ſummoned to appear before the council, commited to the tower, and proſecuted for giving in this humble petition; ſo dangerous was it to make remonſtrances! and ſo ineffectual muſt all methods have been of obtaining redreſs by petitioning! Thus by ſubtlety, and under colour of law, did the King vex and oppreſs his Proteſtant Subjects, and deſtroy the legal ſecurity of their religion. But fearing that at laſt he ſhould be obliged to uſe force, he endeavoured at the ſame time to ſtrengthen himſelf with an army and a fleet, to engage the officers to ſupport him in the execution of his deſigns, and to introduce Popiſh officers, as much as he could, both into the army and navy.

Now

Now, in ſuch a deplorable ſituation, how could the nation have avoided reſiſting the King, unleſs they had tamely reſolved to ſuffer him entirely to deſtroy their conſtitution. It was evident, that the moſt humble petitions and remonſtrances would have availed nothing with a Prince who was ſo zealous for Popery, who had drunk in ſuch extravagant principles concerning his own authority, and was ſo firm and reſolute in his temper: they were therefore under an abſolute neceſſity, either to reſiſt him by force, or to give up every thing to his will; and, as he muſt have looked on force as rebellion, the moment he had been delivered from it, he would have revoked all; and there could have been no ſafety for ſuch as had oppoſed him. It was therefore not only neceſſary to reſiſt him at that time, but to put it for ever out of his power to overturn the legal government of *Britain*. This being manifeſtly the caſe, the ſubjects of *Great Britain* judged almoſt unanimouſly, that they had a juſt title to defend their conſtitution by force; but, how this ſhould be done with ſafety and ſucceſs, required the moſt ſerious deliberation.

On this extraordinary occaſion, ſuch as were moſt ſenſible of their country's wrongs, and moſt able to conduct ſo great an enterprize, naturally caſt their eyes on the Prince of *Orange*, the neareſt heir to the Crown, except King *James*'s own children, to the eldeſt of whom he was married: and having invited him

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to ſave the nation from ruin; under his conduct, they reſolved to reſiſt the King, and ſettle their affairs on a ſurer and more equitable footing. Let us not unjuſtly and ingratefully accuſe this great Prince of parricide and enormous ambition, for relieving the diſtreſſed, and ſaving a ſinking State. Let us not, with the ſervile flatterers of tyrants, and the contemptible tools of arbitrary power, blacken the memory of one of the greateſt and wiſeſt of our Princes, diſtinguiſhed for mercy, no leſs than for valour; a lover of juſtice and liberty; and worthy to be celebrated among thoſe heroes born for the good of mankind, and the defence of injured nations. To whom could the people of *Great Britain* have had recourſe in ſuch a deſperate ſtate of their affairs, with greater hopes of ſucceſs to themſelves? To whom could the rights of the family upon the throne have been more ſafely committed, as far as they were compatible with the more ſacred rights of a whole people? But King *James*, ever reſolute in his ſchemes, determined not to abandon his ill-concerted deſigns, and finding it at the ſame time impoſſible to ſucceed in them, being abandoned by almoſt the whole nation, forſaken by his favourites and friends, deſerted even by his own daughter and her huſband, Prince *George* of *Denmark*, retired with his family to *France*: a manifeſt and fatal document, that nothing which was wiſe, ſafe, or moderate, could be expected from him! On this ſurpriſing e-

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vent, the people of *Great Britain* were neither wanting to themſelves nor to their great Deliverer. The *Engliſh* Peers, and a convention of the Commons fairly elected, declared that King *James* had abdicated the government, and that the throne was thereby become vacant. The *Scotch*, with greater life and ſpirit, found and declared that he had forfeited his right to the Crown. Theſe votes and declarations were paſſed with all the ſolemnities which could have been obſerved when there was no King upon the throne, and by the very ſame perſons, who, along with the Monarch, have a ſhare in the legiſlative power: this grand event was brought about without fighting or ſhedding blood, without diſorder or confuſion; never perhaps was the peace of a great nation ſo little diſturbed upon an event of ſuch importance! Let us not be told, by thoſe who can only deal in ſubtleties and forms, that the throne can never become vacant; that, the moment the King dies, his lawful heir ſucceeds him; and that no parliament can be called but in the King's name: theſe are puerilities unworthy of any ſerious anſwer, and below our regard in a queſtion of this important nature; the worthy patriots at the revolution deſpiſed theſe "unſubſtantial forms;" and they ought ever to be deſpiſed in caſes of this nature. The ſafety and happineſs of a nation muſt not depend on grammatical niceties, nor upon the quirks, but the ſpirit of the laws. The Lords and Commons

mons of *Great Britain* were not obliged to place upon the throne, an infant who had been carried over to *France*, without the knowledge of the nation, and wholly under the power of a Monarch who was an enemy to their religion and liberty; ſuch a ſettlement would not only have been inexpedient, but muſt have been entirely deſtructive. It was neceſſary, as an effectual ſecurity againſt King *James*, or any, who in virtue of a right from him, might lay claim to the ſame abſolute power, and endeavour to deſtroy the Proteſtant religion and the liberty of *Great Britain*, to declare the Prince and Princeſs of *Orange* King and Queen: this was done accordingly. It was further neceſſary to exclude the whole Popiſh line of the Royal family, from the ſucceſſion to the Crown; and to ſettle the ſucceſſion in the Proteſtant line of heirs: this was alſo done as circumſtances required. In all which ſettlements, the nation proceeded with the greateſt regard to wiſdom and juſtice. It was wiſe to provide an effectual ſecurity; it was juſt to make no unneceſſary alterations. Thus, they finiſhed the great deſign they had happily begun; and now, at the diſtance of more than ſixty years, in virtue of theſe ſettlements, our preſent moſt gracious Sovereign King *George* II. happily ſits on our throne.

In this manner, the *Britiſh* nation aſſerted their right to defend themſelves againſt the encroachments of their Sovereign in the year

1688: thus they actually reſiſted him, and happily ſucceeded: thus do they aſſert at preſent, and, I hope, ſhall aſſert, in all ages to come, that none, pretending to claim from the late King *James*, by virtue of an indefeaſible hereditary right, nor any other perſons whatſoever, have any juſt title to enſlave the *Britiſh* nation; and that *Britons* have a right to defend themſelves againſt tyranny and arbitrary power. Let ſlaviſh nations boaſt of the indefeaſible hereditary right of their Princes, and their abſolute and uncontroulable power; let them ignorantly and ſtupidly boaſt of their own tameneſs; let them meanly and inglorioufly lay down their heads upon blocks, and preſent their naked breaſts to the ſwords of their Monarchs: but let the *Britiſh* nation juſtly boaſt of their liberty, and the authority of law ſuperior to the authority of Kings.

This glorious revolution has taken firm root, and been the ſource of great felicity. Notwithſtanding the plots and rebellions which have ſometimes diſturbed our tranquillity; notwithſtanding a diſputed ſucceſſion; notwithſtanding all the wars in which we have been engaged ſince that time, and all the inconveniencies of any kind that can poſſibly be imputed to the change that was then made; we have good reaſon to acknowledge, that we are amongſt the happieſt and moſt fortunate nations that perhaps ever were under heaven. Scarce can a period be aſſigned, in all antient or modern hiſtory,

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of ſuch a long continuance as the period of 66 years ſince the revolution, in which any people have enjoyed ſuch ſolid and ſubſtantial bleſſings: an entire freedom from all kinds of perſecution; a perfect liberty of worſhipping God according to our conſciences; ſecurity to our perſons againſt arbitrary impriſonments; ſecurity of our lives and properties from arbitrary judgments; freedom from all taxes and all penalties or puniſhments whatſoever without the conſent of the Peers of the Realm, and of Gentlemen elected by thoſe who poſſeſs property in the nation; liberty of ſpeech and debate, of writing and printing, in the moſt ample manner we can deſire. In one word; we enjoy the advantages of republics, without their unſteadineſs and confuſions; and the advantages of monarchy, without danger of oppreſſion. We know nothing of letters *de cachet*, or blank warrants for baniſhment or impriſonment, where the names of the unfortunate ſufferers are to be inſerted according to the will of the Miniſter, or inferior governours. There is not a *Baſtile* in our capital, where ſuch unhappy perſons, as fall under the diſpleaſure of the Monarch or his favourites, may languiſh for years together, without knowing the cauſe of their confinement, and without a poſſibility of being releaſed but at the pleaſure of the ſame exorbitant and arbitrary power. Nor have we any examples of miſerable priſoners, who, ſurviving all who had any knowledge of what they were impriſoned for

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at firſt, after being confined during half a century, have died, intirely forgotten by mankind. Such are the trophies of abſolute power, unknown in this land of liberty!

It is true, we have not been exempted from calamities: but, whatever judgements we have met with from Almighty God, we have no reaſon to apprehend, that they have been inflicted on account of the revolution, or the defence of it; but we have drawn them down on our guilty heads by our conduct in other reſpects; and, in particular, among other great and crying ſins, we have been guilty of high ingratitude to God and men, for the mighty advantages procured by the revolution: for theſe repeated and aggravated ſins, we have been moſt juſtly puniſhed by almighty God; but, as his mercies are great, he hath puniſhed us far leſs than our iniquities have deſerved. Notwithſtanding all the calamities which we have met with from the hand of a wiſe and righteous providence, the inhabitants of *Britain*, ſince the revolution, have lived in one of the happieſt countries that perhaps ever was in the world. Let us only beware, leſt we miſimprove our advantages, leſt we prove ingrateful, leſt we become wanton, and ſink into a deep lethargy and an unmanly ſoftneſs and luxury, thro' the abundance of our bleſſings; for indeed we enjoy an abundant felicity. Whatever may be repreſented by a diſſaffected party; whether from miſtaken notions of loyalty, from ignorance of the world or of the *Britiſh* conſtitution,

tution, from the prejudices of education, or from more corrupted principles and aims; and whatever may be thrown out at random peeviſhly or perverſely, by the different parties amongſt us, which may always be expected under ſuch a free government, and, perhaps, upon the whole, may be conſidered as tending to its ſecurity; we are the envy and admiration of all wiſe foreigners who underſtand our conſtitution. It is good to avoid all fooliſhneſs of boaſting; but, without going beyond bounds, may we not aſk, where is there a ſubject of ſuch dignity and authority, ſo ſecure and independent, as a *Britiſh* Peer? Where are there Commons ſo far removed from ſlavery and contempt, of ſuch influence in their country, and bleſſed with ſuch plenty, as the Commons of great *Britain?* I rejoice in the felicity of the ſouthern parts of the iſland, in this reſpect; would to God that the northern parts were equally happy, and that liberty and independence may ſpeedily reach to the Highlands of *Scotland!* What thanks are due to a wiſe adminiſtration, for laying the foundation of ſuch a mighty bleſſing! What thanks are due to our great men, who have generouſly concurred in ſuch an excellent meaſure! What thanks will be due to every one who ſhall effectually carry it on hereafter!

All this happineſs we enjoy under a family deſcended from the antient race of our Kings, the neareſt heirs to the Crown by a hereditary right,

right, after the juſt and neceſſary excluſion of the Popiſh line. This family has been called to the throne, to ſupport the revolution, and to maintain and defend the legal rights of the people of *Great Britain*. Two excellent Princes of this family have happily reigned over us, and have governed according to law. Under their reigns, this iſland, and *Scotland* in particular, has greatly flouriſhed. The number of our people has increaſed; our fields and gardens are better cultivated, and produce better kinds, and a greater quantity of fruits; we breed more numerous ſtores of cattle; our houſes are much better, and much more richly furniſhed; our warehouſes are filled with a more valuable quantity of goods; the prices of our lands are greatly raiſed; our manufactures much increaſed, and our commerce more widely extended; compared with the idleneſs of former times, induſtry has likewiſe been greatly propagated amongſt us: nay, our growing luxury ſo much and ſo juſtly complained of, appearing evidently in the magnificence of our houſes, in coſtly ſervices of plate and ſumptuouſneſs of other furniture, in the elegance of our tables, and in the richneſs of cloaths, is at the ſame time a manifeſt document of our ſuperior wealth. In ſhort, we want nothing to make us happy, but hearts ſenſible of our mercies, and diſpoſitions to make a proper uſe of them. May a ſpirit of piety and virtue be poured down upon us in abundance!

bundance! As the freedom of our government is the ſource of ſo many advantages, may we ever contend earneſtly againſt all who would enſlave us! By the help of God, we have hitherto been able eaſily to baffle all the attempts of the Pretender to his Majeſty's Crown, and to maintain the juſt title of the family of *Hanover* to the throne. By the vigilance and valour of one of the Princes of this family, we have lately cruſhed an unprovoked rebellion againſt a juſt and merciful King. Under the Princes of this family, we will always make head againſt all who would deprive us of our rights; under this family only, we can be free, and under this family, we truſt, we ever ſhall be free.

F I N I S.

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